

UNIT CITATION

148TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

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Colonel Lawrence K. White, Commanding

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COMPANY E, 148TH INFANTRY, is cited FOR THE MAGNIFICENT GALLANTRY, HEROISM, TEAMWORK, AND WILL TO WIN that is demonstrated in this crucial operation, and for its tremendously significant part in the action on Hill 700 which resulted in a victory of major importance to the entire United States' defense of Bougainville Island.

During the recent offensive action by Japanese forces against the United States' positions on Bougainville Island, Company E, 148th Infantry Regiment, participated in a counterattack against enemy positions atop Hill 700 which resulted in the destruction of Japanese forces in that sector and the removal of a major threat to our position. This action, which took place on 11-12 March 1944, was a double-envelopment by Company E and Company F, 148th Infantry Regiment, and represented one of the outstanding examples of daring and courage to occur in this Theater. The proximity of the enemy to our lines prohibited the use of supporting artillery and the rugged terrain precluded the use of tanks. Our attacking forces were compelled to advance against almost every conceivable obstacle. The enemy enjoyed a commanding position, excellent fields of fire, superior observation, and the natural advantage accruing to the defender. Company E, on the other hand, had to execute a difficult flanking movement across precipitous, fire-swept terrain against a determined and confident enemy occupying strong defensive positions.

The initial attack, on 11 March, resulted in capturing two flanking pillboxes but left the enemy in control of the most important of his positions on the crest of the Hill. Throughout that night the men of Company E clung tenaciously to their precarious position on the hillside, enduring constant fire from mortars and machine guns, and the effect of hand grenades rolled down the Hill toward them. Next morning, 12 March, they renewed the attack, coordinating with Company F on the west flank, charging the enemy positions under a withering hail of fire at point-blank range. Utilizing rocket launchers, flame throwers, smoke grenades, and other Infantry weapons, the men of Company E swept over the Japanese positions, made contact with Company F approaching from the west, and secured the objective. Company E lost one officer, 11 enlisted men were killed, and three officers and 25 enlisted men were wounded. The enemy lost 407 counted dead in this immediate area and were practically annihilated. The backbone of the entire enemy offensive on Bougainville was broken.